

Early Foundations of Reading and Literacy



First Things First Conference
April 2008

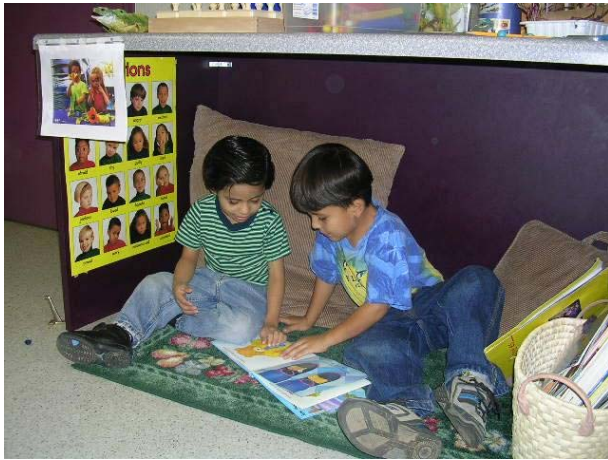
Angela Capone Ph.D.
Senior Program Manager
Services for Children with Disabilities
Southwest Human Development

Ideas to ponder



- ⌘ How do we construct our reading and language knowledge?
- ⌘ What is this word- Aboolia?
- ⌘ How do you know how to say it?
- ⌘ What does it mean?

It's About Relationships



Learning to read is a key milestone for children living in a literate society.



Relationship Between Reading & Literacy



- ⌘ Reading is a complex system of deriving meaning from print that requires the following:
 - ☑ The skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech sounds are connected to print;
 - ☑ The ability to decode unfamiliar words;
 - ☑ The ability to read fluently;

Relationship Between Reading & Literacy



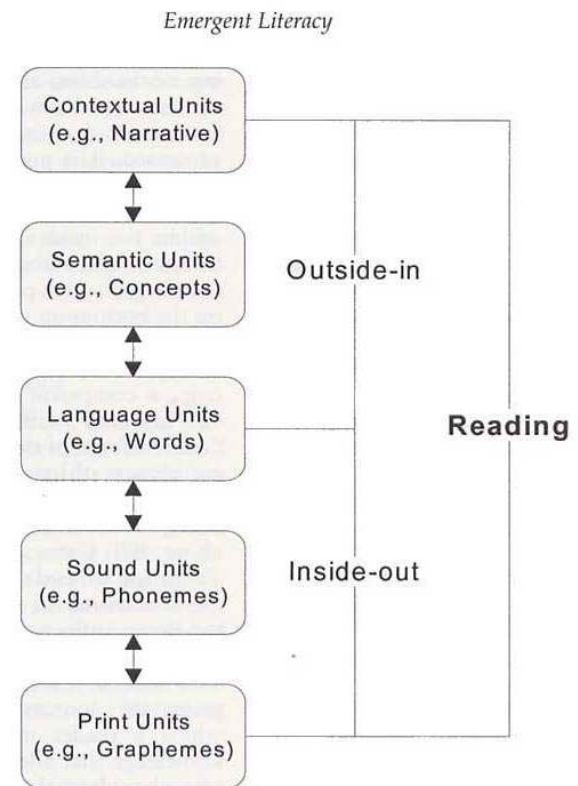
Reading Continued-

- ☒ Sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster reading comprehension;
- ☒ The development of appropriate active strategies to construct meaning from print; and
- ☒ The development and maintenance of a motivation to read.

(Reading First Section of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)

Two Domains of Literacy

⌘ Whitehurst & Lonigan



Fluent readers must:



- ⌘ Decode units of print, into-
- ⌘ Units of sound, into
- ⌘ Units of language
- ⌘ The inside-out process

Then the reader must:



⌘ Understand the meaning of the print.

☑ Or the Outside-In process

Inside Out & Outside In



⌘ She sent off to the very best seed house for five bushels of lupine seed.

Reading Difficulty



⌘ Contributes to school failure

⌘ Increases the likelihood of:

- ☑ absenteeism

- ☑ leaving school early

- ☑ delinquency

- ☑ substances abuse

- ☑ teen pregnancy

Reading Difficulties can:




- ⌘ Perpetuate the cycle of poverty and dependence.

There is strong continuity between the skills with which children enter school and their later academic performance.



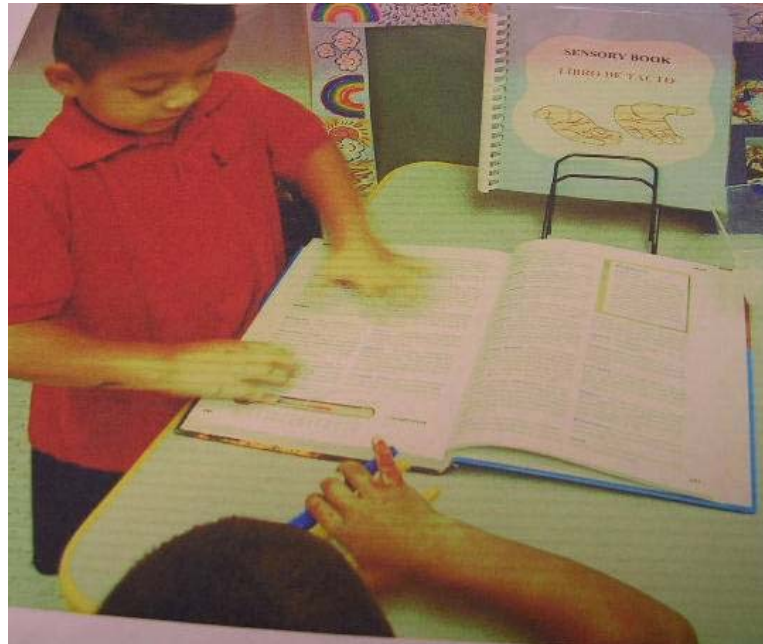
Researchers agree that children are more likely to become good readers if they start school with the following accomplishments:



- ⌘ Oral language.
- ⌘ Ability to attend to the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning
- ⌘ Familiarity with the basic purposes and mechanisms of reading
- ⌘ Letter knowledge
- ⌘ Motivation and appreciation for literature

Children with more of these skills:

- ⌘ Profit more from reading instruction;
- ⌘ Learn to read sooner; and
- ⌘ Read better.



Children Who READ MORE Acquire MORE KNOWLEDGE



- ⌘ Avid Middle School Child reads approximately 10,000,000 words per year
- ⌘ Unmotivated child of the same age reads approximately 100,000 words per year

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



Sponsoring Agency: U.S. Department of
Education, National Center for Education
Statistics

Subjects: A nationally representative sample
of 23,000 kindergarteners from 1,000
kindergarten programs (begun in 1998,
to be followed through grade 5).

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



Focus: children's reading skills as they:

1. Entered kindergarten in the fall 1998
2. Ended kindergarten in the spring 1999
3. Ended first grade in spring 2000

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



- ⌘ 67% had letter recognition at kindergarten entry, 95% at the end of kindergarten, and 100% at the end of first grade.
- ⌘ 31% understood letter-sound relationships at beginning of words at kindergarten entry, 74% at the end of kindergarten, and 98% by the end of first grade.

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



- ⌘ 18% understood the letter-sound relationships at the end of words at the start of kindergarten, 54% by the end, and 94% by the end of first grade
- ⌘ 3% had sight-word recognition skills at start of kindergarten, 14% by the end of kindergarten, and 83% by the spring of their first grade year

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



⌘ 1% understood words in context at the start of kindergarten, this increased to 4% at the end of kindergarten, and 48% by the end of first grade.

(Denton, p.11)

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



⌘ Children from more disadvantaged backgrounds- are closing gaps in basic skills- such as recognizing letters and counting beyond 10- **However,**

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



⌘ They lag further behind more advanced classmates when it comes to more sophisticated reading and math skills- word recognition and vocabulary-
In fact- **The Gap Has Widened**

Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Lives of Young American Children (Hart & Risley, 1995)



- ⌘ Long-term investigation focusing on verbal interactions between parents and their children.
- ⌘ They studied 42 families whom they classified into 3 groups:
 - ☑ Professional families
 - ☑ Working class families
 - ☑ Families on welfare

Key features that could be applied to all families:



- ⌘ "Just Talked"- generally using a wide vocabulary
- ⌘ "Tried to be Nice"- high rates of approval
- ⌘ "Told children about things"- language had high information content
- ⌘ "Gave children choices- children were asked about things rather than simply being directed"

Characteristics of Families with Higher SES backgrounds




- ⌘ Explained and offered alternatives rather than directives
- ⌘ Explained about what was going on
- ⌘ Asked more questions
- ⌘ Encouraged their children to ask questions
- ⌘ Talked more and talked more often

Findings:



⌘ Although children from all groups started to speak about the same time- their vocabulary as measured by the number of different words used varied significantly.

By age three the observed cumulative vocabulary :



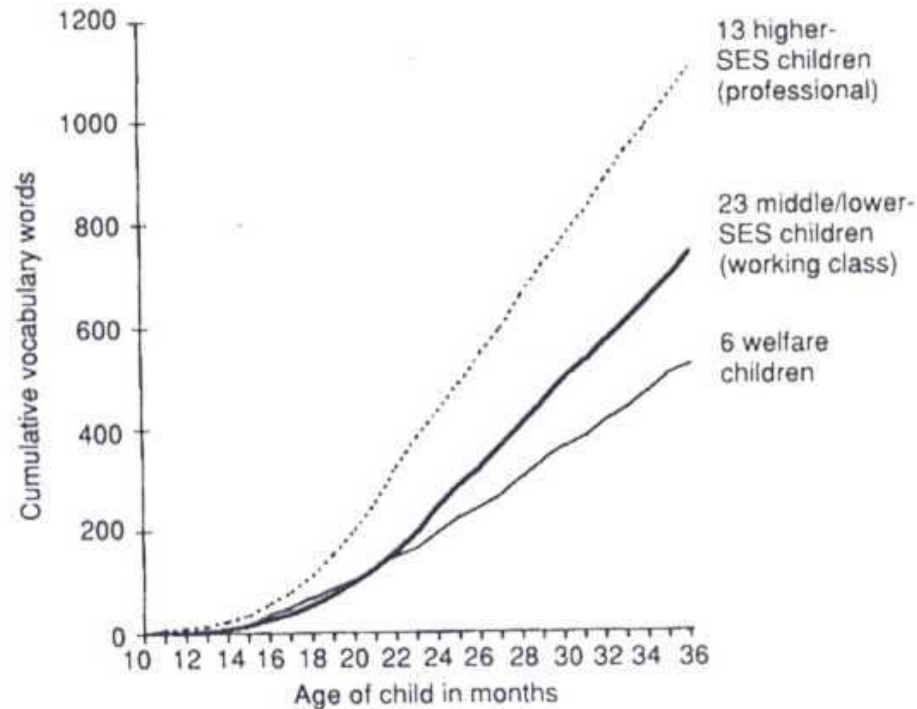
⌘ For children in professional families 1,100

⌘ For children in working class families 750

⌘ For children in welfare families 500

Meaningful Differences in the Every Day Lives of Young American Children

Hart & Risley (1995)



Language Experiences



⌘ Children heard an average of:

- ☒ 2,153 words per hour in professional families
- ☒ 1,251 words per hour in working class families
- ☒ 626 words per hour in welfare families

Long-term Impact



- ⌘ 29 of the children were followed to ages 9 to 10
- ⌘ The earlier parenting measures were still able to account for 61 percent of the variance in measures of ability.

The Matthew Effect



⌘ The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

(Stanovich, 1986)

The Relationship Between Reading and Literacy



Literacy is defined as an “individual’s ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in society.”

(Workforce Investment Act of 1998)

Consider.....



- ⌘ Few children who enter school without strong early literacy skills “catch up”.
- ⌘ Children with poor literacy skills are at greater risk for poor life outcomes than are their more literate peers.

The call to action-



Consider.....

⌘ Children within the context of their families

⌘ Families within the context of

⌘ Communities within the context of the state



Resources:



⌘ Pediatric Clinics- ROR Project

⌘ Child Care- Child Care Libraries Project

⌘ Hanen Training

Reach Out and Read



- ⌘ ROR was started in 1989 by doctors and early childhood educators at the Boston Medical Center.
- ⌘ ROR is designed to take advantage of the existing structure of pediatric primary care
 - ☑ 10 well child checks between six months and five years of age

ROR Success

(High et al, 1998; Needleman et al, 2005;
Weitzman et al, 2004)



- ⌘ Highly effective
- ⌘ Strong support in the public and private sector has allowed the program to grow to 3200 sites
- ⌘ Distributing 4.1 million books each year
- ⌘ Studies over the past 19 years have demonstrated that when Pediatricians use the ROR model (Book + AG) there is a significant effect on parental attitudes and behavior towards reading aloud and children's language scores improved.

Child Care Libraries for Literacy



⌘ Purpose: Through the provision and use of library collections in child care programs, this project will provide effective staff development activities and technical assistance to enhance responsive teacher-child relationships, the early childhood curriculum, and support literacy in the home.

Child Care Libraries for Literacy Objectives



- ⌘ 1. Enhance staff recognition and awareness the relationships they form with children in their care is at the heart of development early language and literacy skills
- ⌘ 2. Enhance staff's ability to reflect on their own styles of communication and characteristics of responsive caregiver-child interactions
- ⌘ 3. Improve staff knowledge of language and literacy development from infancy through early childhood

Child Care Libraries for Literacy Objectives



- ⌘ 4. Understand how language is the foundation for literacy and pre-literacy skills young children require to become successful readers
- ⌘ 5. Create an environment in each center that increases the quality of language and literacy activities by learning how to plan and facilitate classroom routines and promote interactive language experiences for young children
- ⌘ 6. Engage families and increase parent interest in promoting language and literacy activities with their children

The Hanen Centre



⌘ Mission: to provide the important people in a young child's life with the knowledge and training they need to help the child develop the best possible language, social, and literacy skills

☒ **It Takes Two to Talk**

☒ **Learning Language and Loving It**

To reduce the number of children who enter school with inadequate literacy related skills.

- ⌘ Make sure the message is clear,
- ⌘ Our behavior matches the message,
- ⌘ We provide the resources to accomplish the vision,
- ⌘ CELEBRATE !!!!!